IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An optical recording medium comprising at least:

a supporting substrate;

a recording layer on the supporting substrate, the recording layer ~~containing~~ comprising ~~an~~ at least one organic compound as a major component;

a dielectric layer on the recording layer; and

a light-transmitting layer on the ~~recording~~ dielectric layer, the light-transmitting layer having a thickness of 1 to 150 μm and being capable of transmitting laser light with a wavelength of 390 to 420 nm for recording and reproducing information,

wherein the at least one organic compound in the recording layer includes ~~a~~ at least one monomethine cyanine dye that has the minimum value nmin of its refractive index n (real part of the complex refractive index) within the range of 370 to 425 nm and has a refractive index n of 1.2 or lower with respect to the wavelength of the recording/reproducing laser light; and the organic compound, when absorbing the laser light, melts or degrades to bring about a change in the refractive index, thereby effecting recording of the information, and

wherein the monomethine cyanine dye contains a monomethine group with two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings positioned on ends of the monomethine group, one of the two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings being selected from the group consisting of indolenine and benzothiazole, and the other of the two heterocyclic rings being selected from the group consisting of indolenine, quinoline, benzothiazole, benzimidazole and benzoselenazole.

2. (Original) The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein, at the wavelength of the reproducing laser light, the melting or the degradation of the organic compound causes an increase in the refractive index n of the organic compound.

3. (Original) The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the organic compound has an extinction coefficient k (imaginary part of the complex refractive index) of 0.15 or above, with respect to both the wavelength of the recording laser light and the wavelength of the reproducing laser light.

4. (Cancelled).

5. (Original)The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the monomethine cyanine dye contains a monomethine group with two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings positioned on ends of the monomethine group, the two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings being identical to one another.

6. (Currently Amended) The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the recording layer ~~contains, in addition to the organic compound,~~ further comprises a quencher.

7. (Currently Amended) An optical recording/reproducing method, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

providing an optical recording medium comprising at least a supporting substrate; a recording layer on the supporting substrate, the recording layer ~~containing~~ comprising ~~an~~ at least one organic compound as a major component; a dielectric layer on the recording layer;

and a light-transmitting layer on the ~~recording~~ dielectric layer, the light-transmitting layer having a thickness of 1 to 150 μm and being capable of transmitting laser light with a wavelength of 390 to 420 nm for recording and reproducing information, wherein the at least one organic compound in the recording layer includes ~~a~~ at least one monomethine cyanine dye that has the minimum value nmin of its refractive index n (real part of the complex refractive index) within the range of 370 to 425 nm and has a refractive index n of 1.2 or lower with respect to the wavelength of the recording/reproducing laser light, and the organic compound, when absorbing the laser light, melts or degrades to bring about a change in the refractive index, and wherein the monomethine cyanine dye contains a monomethine group with two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings positioned on ends of the monomethine group, one of the two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings being selected from the group consisting of indolenine and benzothiazole, and the other of the two heterocyclic rings being selected from the group consisting of indolenine, quinoline, benzothiazole, benzimidazole and benzoselenazole;

irradiating a recording laser light of 390 to 420 nm onto the optical recording medium from the light-transmitting layer side thereof to effect recording of the information, whereupon the refractive index n of the at least one organic compound with respect to the wavelength of reproducing laser light of 390 to 420 nm is raised in the area irradiated with the recording laser light; and

subsequent to the recording step, irradiating the reproducing laser light of 390 to 420 nm onto the optical recording medium from the light-transmitting layer side thereof to effect reproducing of the information.

8. (New) The method according to claim 7, wherein the organic compound has an extinction coefficient k (imaginary part of the complex refractive index) of 0.15 or above,

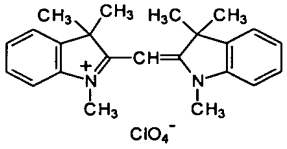
with respect to both the wavelength of the recording laser light and the wavelength of the reproducing laser light.

9. (New) The method according to claim 7, wherein the monomethine cyanine dye contains a monomethine group with two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings positioned on ends of the monomethine group, the two nitrogen-containing heterocyclic rings being identical to one another.

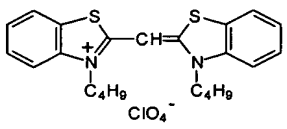
10. (New) The method according to claim 7, wherein the recording layer further comprises a quencher.

11. (New) The optical recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the at least one organic compound in the recording layer includes at least one of the following monomethine cyanine dyes:

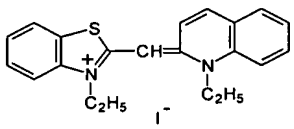
AA-1



CC-1



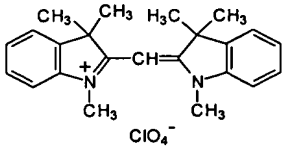
BC-1



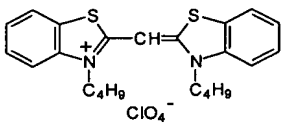
12. (New) The method according to claim 7, wherein the at least one organic compound in the recording layer includes at least one of the following monomethine

cyanine dyes:

AA-1



CC-1



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